



The Weekly Page

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Pages Learn About Legislature



Big ideas in government

Throughout the week pages grappled with understanding the three “big ideas” for a representative government: governing is a complex process, successful democracies rely on responsible citizens, and government affects our life every day. As they participated in daily discussions, listened to guest speakers, and proposed bills in mock committee hearings, their understanding around the concepts deepened. On Friday, they wrote about one of the big ideas to demonstrate the depth of their new knowledge.



Students’ School Skills Swallowed

Olympia— Senate Bill 5001 was introduced yesterday by Senators Jack Stoecker, Jacob Luten, and Jack Bryant. “This bill addresses the issue of Education and will improve K-12 scores in math and science,” said Sen. Luten. The Legislature finds students are lacking science and math skills placing them at a disadvantage for future global jobs. Among teachers of high school biology and life classes, approximately 31 percent of them do not have at least a minor in the field they teach. The Legislature will require that in order to be employed as a high school teacher, one must obtain at minimum a masters degree in the field they wish to teach.

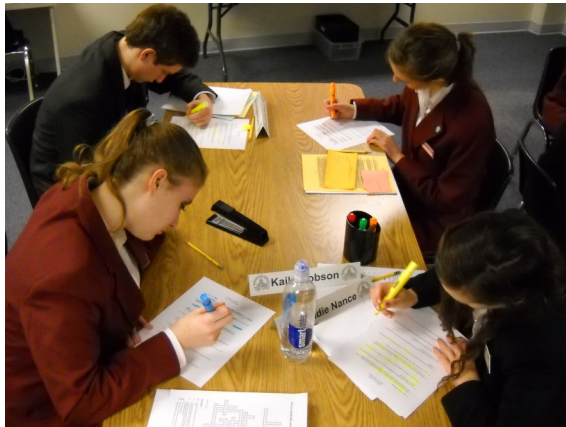


Picture This: No More Fraud

Olympia—Senate Bill 6378 was introduced yesterday by Senators Savannah Follett, Courtney Feters, and Meagan Costa. “This bill addresses the issue of Electronic Benefit Transfers and will reduce fraudulent use of the EBT cards,” said Sen. Follett. Over 27,000 new EBT cards are being replaced monthly. People are illegally selling cards on Craigslist and using cards not issued to them in the stores. Recipients may receive new EBT cards on the spot from the Department of Social and Health Services with no questions asked. Sen. Feters states, “This is an increasing problem that needs to change.” Sen. Costa says, “This type of fraud is unacceptable in Washington State.”

Hammering Down- How Your Money is Spent!

Olympia – House Bill 1234 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Elizabeth Edwards and Lily Wilkinson. “This bill addresses the issue of welfare misuse and will prevent fraudulent use of EBT cards,” said Rep. Edwards. This bill will create and enforce identification on cards or upon purchase. It will decrease the amount of illegal selling of EBT cards and misuse of tax payer money. By banning the extraction of money from ATMs it forces welfare beneficiaries to lessen the convenience of casino purchases, by making them withdraw money only from a bank teller.



Pages write bills, hold mock hearings

Pages worked individually or in small groups to write bills designed to address issues which were relevant to them and the state. Criteria for making a legislative solution work was discussed before students selected issues to research and develop. Then they used bill templates on class computers to formulate official-looking documents in preparation for a mock committee hearing on Thursday. Some topics for policy bills included medical marijuana, plastic bag pollution, sleep deprivation in high school students, and dangerous animal attacks. Pages read their bills and “committee members,” governed by the rules of parliamentary procedure, debated the pros and cons of the proposals. A “DO PASS” or “DO NOT PASS” recommendation was then voted upon, allowing a bill to continue on in the legislative process. As in the real political system, some bills died in committee.



DNA, It's That Kind of Day!

Olympia – House Bill 2346 was introduced yesterday by Representative Perry Atwood. “This bill addresses the issue of DNA laws and will crack down on repetitive criminals,” said Rep. Atwood. This mandate will take the DNA of all criminals. These samples will be compared to any DNA found on big crime scenes, for about 20 years. This is meant to get any criminals who committed smaller crimes before large crimes. If the DNA matches the DNA on the crime scene, a warrant will be sent out for the person. 1/10 committers of felonies aren't caught. Lets hope this makes it 0/10.



Guest speakers visit Page School

Professor Ronda Tentarelli and the Director of Legislative Support Services, Andy Steepleton joined the pages during classes on Wednesday. Each shared insightful information in regards to the legislative process in Washington State. Pages were able to interact with these guests by asking questions and sharing their own views in response to the speaker's questions.

Death Penalty

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Soleil Lewis and Chris Koenig introduced House Bill 2778, which addresses the issue of death penalty. “The bill is a good one because it will stop the imposition of the death penalty on innocent people,” Rep. Tina Orwall stated. In order to lower the rate of death penalties in Washington State, we must eliminate the death penalty and replace with the alternative option of sending the accused to serve a life sentence.

Smokin' Hot New Programs

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Rachel Harper, Maya Savage, and Brooklynn Jones introduced House Bill 1111, which addresses the issue of poor performance in schools. “The bill is a good one because it will provide money for public schools to establish highly capable programs as well as funding for the arts,” Rep. Harper explained. Because our nations schools are falling so far behind, highly capable and arts programs are increasingly necessary. This bill proposes a tax of 2 cents per pack of cigarettes in order to fund these programs. The benefit of arts and highly capable programs are proven many times. Arne Duncan said, “Our children in this country have one chance at education. One chance. We can't wait. We can't wait seven or eight years. We'll lose a generation of kids, and so we have to get better; we have to get better now.”



Wolves: The Hunters or the Hunted?

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Jordan Moore, Noah Payne, and Sean McPherson introduced Senate Bill 5008, which addresses the issue of livestock prevention. “The bill is a good one because it will reduce the amount of livestock killed by wolves,” Sen. Moore stated. With this bill all farmers will be given an exclusive all-season hunting pass. While it allows the farmers the ability to hunt wolves at all times, it will only apply to the hunting of wolves found within a mile of their property. To enforce it, taxes collected on the sale of meat will be used to pay for more park rangers.



Housing the Homeless

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Kaila Hobson and Becky Martin introduced Senate Bill 7831, which addresses the issue of homelessness. “The bill is a good one because it will reduce the amount of homeless in the state,” explained Sen. Hobson. The Legislature will create several homeless outreach facilities where the homeless can stay up to one year, in which they will be required to take courses on interviewing skills, a financial course, and other workforce preparedness skills. Once the beneficiary has acquired a job, they will pay \$125 rent fee each month they stay, and will be required to be relatively sober. Their rent will contribute to the up-keep of the facility and other expenses related to the program. Any other expenses will be paid for via the Washington State Housing Trust Fund, and if necessary, fundraising.



Page School on the web

The Page School has its own web site. You can find us at:

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/PageSchool>

This newsletter has been posted there.